



NAME: PAUL ODHIAMBO

COUNTRY: KENYA

DATE OF BIRTH: 27- 11-1983.

P.O.BOX: 9237-40141, KISUMU-KENYA

E-mail: dhmbpl15@gmail.com

Tel.: +254 725 630164.

I had lost both of my parents to HIV/AIDS by the time I was in fourth grade. I was mentored by my primary school teacher Rom Wandera, the former coordinator of FIOH-Kenya who died suddenly in 2012 at the age of 52. I then took over Rom's position of coordinator after his death.

I was raised by my grandmothers as all of my uncles also died of HIV/AIDS. At the time they thought the illness was due to witchcraft or some other superstition. By the time I was in grade 8 I realized what the disease was and tried to learn all I could about it through FIOH-K, how to treat, and most of all prevent it. Many of my aunts and cousins also suffered from the disease.

I sat for my final primary exams in 1997 at Usoma Primary school and passed highly. I was given admission to one of the best schools in the region but I could not join due to lack of school fees. Rom and other friends managed to pay my school fees for secondary school because they saw my great potential. I had to walk five miles each way to attend Kisumu Day secondary School. I graduated with honors and won a four-year scholarship to study Bachelor of Education at Kenyatta University in Nairobi. However I was unable to pay the extra fees and was afraid I would have to forfeit the scholarship.

FIOH-USA stepped in and found sponsors that paid the \$350 I needed to supplement my scholarship. I graduated from Kenyatta University in 2007 and have been teaching English and French at Kanyamedha Mixed Secondary School. There has been a hiring freeze in Kenya so I have been working as a volunteer. FIOH-USA give me a small monthly stipend. I hope to get a government paid teaching position in the school soon.

I have been working tirelessly with FIOH-Kenya for many years since my day days in primary school. My main passion has been working with the orphans and vulnerable children, women groups, environment and people living with HIV and AIDS.

Following the footsteps of my mentor, the late Rom Wandera, I initiated a programme known as STOP THE SPOT program at Kanyamedha secondary school. The program aims at raising funds to buy Sanitary towels for the poor girls from the slum areas who kept on missing school or dropping out of school as a result of monthly menstrual period. The main aim of the project is to help keep the girl child in school as they are the most disadvantaged. I have expanded the project

to include Usoma Primary school so far the schools are very many and the needs are great but we are unable to expand due to limited funding. At Usoma Primary School, I have gone further through funding from FIOH- USA to establish a school garden to help offer nutritional needs of the pupils and teach them agriculture so that they become self sufficient. The money realized from the sale of farm produce is also used to supplement the STOP THE SPOT project. It costs \$1 a month to support one girl for the sanitary pad. Usoma has 200 girls while Kanyamedha has 350 girls.

I realized that EDUCATION is the key to help alleviate poverty and illiteracy among the Africans. That is why we started THE ROM MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND where we identify bright and needy children in the society and help pay for their tuition. Through support from donors we currently sponsor 36 students both in Primary, vocational, High school and colleges. Fees cost \$ 400 per year. We have very many requests for support as now there are over 20 needy children on the waiting list. This initiative honors Rom's legacy. On the same note we are raising funds to help put up a community library and a resource center .The library will be located in Usoma Village, Kisumu County and a piece of land has been identified.

The other ongoing activities are establishment of tree seedling nurseries in the various villages to help curb desertification especially in Kisumu County, empowerment of women and youth groups through the starting of income generating activities for them. Currently we are working on an income generating activity for the teenage mothers i.e. girls who conceived and dropped out of school, provision of clean and safe water for drinking through sinking of bore holes where 19 wells have been sunk so far in various villages where there is a dire need of water. It costs \$3000 to sink a borehole and install the water pump.

Personal Data:

Married to: Milka Awuor.

Children: Tony Richard

Qualification: B.ED(Arts): English and French, Certificate In Community Development, Certificate in Theatre for Development.

Post: Co-ordinator Future In Our-Hands Kenya, Secretary to Asembo Integrated Family Based Programme - Kisumu, Treasurer Jaboke Youth Initiative.